TOWN & COUNTRY CHURCH

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Pope Pius XII delivered a comprehensive address on rural problems to the International Catholic Congress on the subject, held in Rome this summer. We print the major portion of it on Page 1 because it appears to be the most complete statement on rural life by a Pontiff in recent years.

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No. 73
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Pope Pius XII on Rural Problems

—From an Address to Members of the International Catholic Congress on Problems of Rural Life, Rome, 1951.

• Two obvious facts, self-evident, should convince the least attentive of the importance of these problems. On the one hand, the fact that the majority of mankind lives on the land, either in isolated farms, or in villages or market towns; on the other hand, the fact that these problems, though of immediate concern to these populations themselves, because of their indirect effects are of primary interest to the whole human race, and are related to the internal structure of the State, and even of the Church, by reason of the profound influence they exercise on the biological and intellectual, spiritual and religious, development of humanity.

Our Predecessor of happy memory, Pius XI, in his encyclical *Quadragesimo Anno,* when speaking of the favorable and unfavorable consequences of the economic system of industrial capitalism, had already drawn attention to the dwellers on the land (cf. *Acta Apostolicae Sedis,* vol. 23, 1931, page 210). The question has lost none of its urgency.

Paralleling its pressure on the whole economic life (and this state of affairs still continues), that economic system had necessarily to make its influence felt on the spiritual, social and material conditions of rural populations. Nay more, today it can be said that the destiny of all mankind is at stake: Will men be successful or not in balancing this influence in such a way as to preserve for the spiritual, social and economic life of the rural world its specific character? Will they succeed in assuring it, if not a preponderant, at least an equal impact on the life of the human family as a whole?

Could it be that there are irreconcilable causes of conflict in this area? By no means. From the very fact that one lives in the natural conditions of human life and its unfolding, the division of labor and functions does not of necessity engender conflicts of this kind. Everyone of good will must recognize that the system of industrial capitalism has helped render possible and has even stimulated an increase in agricultural production; that it has permitted, in many regions of the world, higher levels of physical and spiritual life for rural people. It is not then the system itself which is to be opposed, but rather the danger it would run if its influence were to succeed in altering the specific character of rural living, by assimilating it to the life of urban and industrial centers, by making of the "country," as we understand it here, a simple extension of the "city." . . .

Today, men have the opportunity of deciding whether they will continue to follow a one-sided and short-sided policy of "yield;" or rather will begin to direct it toward the totality of social economy, which is its objective end. Here are some examples: contemplated assistance to "underdeveloped" regions; agrarian reform, happily begun here and there; emigration and immigration, encouraged by international arrangements; a better regional grouping of complementary national economies; a better distribution of productive forces within national boundaries. All these measures should have for their purpose, among others, to assure rural peoples everywhere their proper character, their proper influence, their proper value in the economy and society.

It is exactly that which must be borne in mind when one deplores the defects and clashes in human relations, resulting from the labor structure in the world of industrial capitalism. Complaint is made, in effect, that labor has, as it were, "lost its soul," that is to say, the personal and social sense of human living. Complaint is made that labor, oppressed on all sides by a complexity of organizations, sees this human life transformed into a giant automaton, of which men are only the

unconscious cogs. Complaint is made that technology, "standardizing" every move, works to the detriment of the individuality and personality of the worker.

A single remedy, universally applicable, would be difficult to find. It is none the less true that work of the farm acts as a powerful defense against all these disorders. We are thinking here first of the peasant farm, of the family-type farm. Of such is made up that rural class, which by reason of its over-all social character, and also by reason of its economic function, forms as it were the nucleus of a healthy rural population. To say this is not to deny the utility, often the necessity of larger farm enterprises. Nevertheless, in close contact with nature, as God created and governs it, the worker in the fields knows by daily experience that human life is in the hands of its Author. No other working group is so suited as his to the life of the family, viewed as a spiritual, economic and juridical unit, and also in the matter of production and consumption.

However hard this work may be, man finds himself still master of his world through action at the heart of the community: of the family, of the neighborhood, and also, secondarily, of various economic cooperatives, provided, nevertheless, that these remain in all truth, and not merely as a matter of form, grounded on the responsibility of the entire membership. As regards modern technology, in the full measure in which it should place itself at the service of the individual farm enterprise, it will adapt itself naturally to the concrete situation in each particular case. Thus it will leave intact the individualistic character of agricultural labor.

Far be it from Us to indulge in unreal romanticism. With much patience and tact, it is necessary to place the farm world once more on the path of its salvation, master its defects, overcome the fascination for a world which is alien to it.

It is particularly satisfying to Us to be able to welcome your Congress precisely at this time, when agricultural organizations and agencies, already of proven capacity, have established their headquarters in the Eternal City, or continue to develop their activity here. And We are happy to assure all the agencies and offices of the United Nations, destined to bring international assistance to the working man, that the Church is ever prepared to support their efforts with her most sympathetic collaboration. . . .

Church and Agricultural Policy

• A group of sixty Christian leaders, including farm operators and officials of the National Grange, Farm Bureau Federation, Farmers Union and other agricultural organizations, participated in a conference on the Church and Agricultural Policy at Haverford, Pa., June 14-16. This conference was called by the Department of the Church and Economic Life of the National Council of the Churches of Christ in the U. S. A.

The conference statement on agricultural policy declares that the Church must seek such policies and practices in our agriculture as will assure a maximum of freedom to all.

Only where there is appeal to a just law can there be justice, the group asserted. "Moreover, concerned as it is for the welfare of all mankind, it is the Church's purpose that the products of agriculture be made available with a minimum of obstruction to their flow from producer to consumer."

Historically, the statement pointed out, the agricultural producer has often been at the mercy of other forces in our economy. In recent years he has turned successfully to government for assistance. Holding that it is essential that the producer be not penalized for the abundance of his production the group maintained that he should participate actively in the processes of marketing his products.

The conference, the first of its kind called by the National Council of Churches, approved, in addition to the general statement, reports of four study groups on phases of the agricultural problem: agriculture's share of the national income, migratory labor, land reform and international problems.

Examining "unwholesome tensions" in agriculture the group found that many are the product of "man's failure to recognize his stewardship of God's creation and his responsibility to posterity."

Church members, it was contended, have a three-fold responsibility towards agriculture:

1. To know the meaning of the Christian faith and its requirement to build the Christian community in and through agriculture;

2. To be informed of their relation to, and the importance of, agricultural policy in our nation and the world;

3. To exercise their influence in the application of the Christian faith to agricultural policy, as citizens, as neighbors, and as members of farm organizations and of churches.

A Pastor's Influence

Dick Flinn, a Presbyterian minister, had turned down big city parishes because he knew that the battle for the soil would never be won until new forces of hope entered the souls of the people. And so he accepted a call to Carrollton, Georgia.

Dick Flinn believed in the practical implications of Christian faith so he inspired a mill owner to turn over a vacant storehouse for a library, got the people to collect books and the college to lend a librarian. This was just a start.

A recent issue of *Social Action*, 289 Fourth Avenue, New York 10, tells the story of how Carrollton, and Carroll County, in which Carrollton is located, achieved almost unattainable goals in agriculture, industry, education, religion and recreation. Under a pastor's influence and leadership Carrollton has demonstrated the way in which teamwork can coordinate community resources.

Rural English Parishes

• Of the 11,000 rural parishes in England, there are 7,000 Methodist churches, it is reported in *The Christian Citizen*, London.

Church Finds Farming Profitable

GEORGE SHANE

• The Salem Evangelical United Brethren Church, Defiance, Iowa, of which Walter Cerka is pastor, has proved that the rural church of today may find one of its best answers for survival and growth in the very land on which it stands. Salem Church owns and operates twenty-seven acres of farm land.

From the income gained, the church has been able during the last twelve years to make extensive church improvements, buying a moving picture projection outfit for community enjoyment and at the same time broaden and strengthen in many ways the church's role in religious fellowship and family life.

God's Acre Plan

The idea, to some extent, was developed from the now-commonly used "God's Acre" plan, under which a farmer allots the income of a portion of his ground to the church.

Under the plan in Defiance, the entire congregation is brought together on church "work days." In this manner are gained the old-fashioned pleasures and advantages of families working together in church activities.

The church has 110 families in its membership. The plan pays an average of $1,000 a year net income. Last year the sale of corn gave a profit of $1,350.

Income from the land is kept entirely separate from the regular contribution income and in no way has lessened the giving of the congregation, the pastor believes.

"This program means much more than just money," Mr. Cerka said. "You can see that the people working together in the field get a great sense of enjoyment. By working together the congregation members really come to know each other.

"For example, this is the only Protestant church in a radius of eight miles . . . The land plan gives an additional opportunity to bring these families together." An important part of a work day for the church is the pot luck dinner which is served in the church basement.

Aids Minister

"If a country church may have only an acreage it may maintain the minister through good and bad times and make him more economically secure," Mr. Cerka said. "But he has to be happy and interested in that type of program and find joy in the things that a farmer has. We need more training in our seminaries for this type of rural work."

Mr. Cerka believes that the role of the rural church is of increasing importance today, and that far too many are closing. "Better transportation and the fact that some rural churches are close together are factors in their closing," he said. "But too many are closing because of financial problems," he added. "The church homestead plan and the land operation plan in many cases offer the best solution for the rural church's survival."

—Reprinted from the *Des Moines Sunday Register*

Photo by Philip Gendreau, N. Y.

Monroe County, N. Y.

A Parish Youth Group

J. P. PENNINGTON

• The Namekagon Parish is in northwest Wisconsin. It is not "a larger parish" with a staff; just a larger parish consisting of four yoked churches in economically poor Washburn County. Three of the churches are in cross-roads communities; one is in the open country.

What to do with youth meetings and Bible study and (or) prayer meetings, or any stated week-night meeting, is always a poser. This is not a pat answer, but it is pushed onto the page this morning because of a thrilling experience last evening.

Some years ago the Namekagon Parish was tested with proposed youth meetings once each month in each church community. In another instance the night meeting for Bible study and prayer was attempted in each church requesting it. Neither experiment got legs. Always there was the invitation from the pastor to invite neighborhood groups for this type of special devotion and experience, but there were no takers.

Parish Youth Group

About two and a half years ago some young people in one of the churches, about a half dozen, invited any interested from the other churches to meet with the pastor at their church to canvas the idea of a parish youth group. Out of this meeting came a normal and healthy "youngster" to partake of the parish life in the form of a parish youth group which meets every third week on Monday nights.

The meeting (like a once famous country) has three parts—a very brief business meeting, thirty to forty-five minutes for the serious in charge of the pastor, and the last part, which is given over to the not so serious, but all important, evening's fun and lunch. The meetings average about twenty from the four churches.

Last spring, after a series of four home meetings for special devotion and study during Lent, a suggestion came to continue them; discussion revealed Thursday night as the most feasible.

The meetings have been attended by from sixteen to thirty persons. We have made a study from the book of Luke. One evening we did not cover many verses, but we did hold communion and fellowship with God through his word. We were reminded, I'm sure, that a man "went away, giving word through all the town of the great things which Jesus had done for him."

Recently four Sunday school superintendents were there, two Ladies' Aid presidents, and other officers. Since Jesus used an upper room for fellowship, there is nothing that compares with a gathering of earnest seekers after truth in the approved way of "gathering together" in a home to witness that Jesus can do great things for "whosoever will."

I predict that these meetings will continue through "seed time and harvest." And we all seem to agree that we need this kind of "shower of blessing," this kind of refreshing.

Evangelism in Vermont

• Effective evangelistic campaigns have recently been carried on in the rural parishes of Brownington and Bradford, Vermont, according to Edward J. Vorba, minister of the First Congregational Church of Bradford, who conducted the programs. Mr. Vorba has told the story in a recent issue of *Advance*, official periodical of the Congregational Christian Churches, 287 Fourth Avenue, New York 10, N. Y. The article was entitled, "It Did Happen in Vermont."

The Brownington Church received forty newcomers into its membership after the campaign; the Bradford church, more than sixty. Other little rural churches had similar successes. Thus, "progress has been made in the building of Christian communities."

California Conferences

The Northern California-Nevada Council of churches projected a series of three rural church conferences last spring. These were held at Davis and Visalia, California, and at Reno, Nevada. The meetings featured a combination of professional rural leaders, ministers and lay people.

The conference focussed on the purposes of strengthening the church's ministry in the country community, making the community church conscious, and examining the attitudes of laymen and ministers toward their task.

A layman observed that a minister could greatly strengthen his ministry by working with committees.

A minister said it was not necessary for success to have a cluster of degrees hanging from his name.

Another layman reported that some of the largest land owners in his community five years ago were Okies.

An agricultural income from California farmers in 1950 of over three and a third billion dollars was reported by an extension agent.

In a group of twelve pastors, three reported that the sunrise services in their communities were conducted by groups outside the church, without reference to it.

California churches, mostly town-centered, have a pressing obligation to extend their ministries to the rapidly expanding peripheral areas.

Prominent in leadership were Bishop Summer Walters, Episcopal Diocese of San Joaquin; the Rev. Deane F. Babbitt, chairman of program committee; the Rev. Ray F. Magnuson, pastor of Grace Methodist church, Yuba City; and Dr. Richard A. Myers, Stockton, Calif.

—Mark Rich

Doctrine of the Farm

• The doctrine of the farm is merely this, that every man ought to stand in primary relations with the work of the world. . . .

—RALPH WALDO EMERSON
in *Man the Reformer.*

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Evangelism: Basic Problem of the Rural Church

THOMAS ALFRED TRIPP

• The rural church has many problems but one is fundamental; namely evangelism. Winning people to Christ and enriching their lives is a concern of all churches, whether rural or urban, but there are differences in the conditions of evangelism from one type of community to another. Special requirements are placed upon the rural pastor and church if they are to go out into the highways and hedges of a complicated society and compel people to come into the church.

Christian evangelism is weakest in rural areas. The large unchurched element in the rural population is the biggest source of frustration of the town and country church. Farmers and villagers are outside the church in higher relative numbers than city people. In the most rural states as high as 80 per cent of the population is not related to any church by membership. It is fairly accurate to say that the more rural the state the lower the percentage of the total population in the church.

Evangelism Is All These

Evangelism is attained through the preaching of the Gospel. It is teaching the truths and traditions of Christianity. It is fellowship and the development of religious faith. It is social engineering to build as one people of the various rural classes.

In order to accomplish the desired results of preaching and nurture, attention must be given to certain characteristics of rural society. There is need for understanding the forces which are barriers to participation in the Christian community. It is known that many people are outside the church for reasons arising from their social situation. Church membership is relatively lower in rural than in urban areas. Farmers are enlisted by the church to a lesser degree than villagers. Ranchers and farmers in sparsely-populated regions are still less evangelized. Lower class rural people—villagers living "across the tracks" or in rural slum conditions, farmers on poor land, farm tenants, agricultural migrants, farm wage earners or "farm hands" and rural racial minorities—are most neglected of all. It appears that those living farthest out from population centers and those who have least economic security are most likely to be overlooked.

Showing Life and Message

How can these things be? The church wishes to share its life and message with rural people but it does not readily do this. The reason is partly because of a feeling of social distance which exists between the various classes and groups in the rural population. This is the crux of the problem: *The churches do not reach certain rural classes because church people do not want them.* The feeling is entirely unconscious. Church members think they wish everyone to be in the church but their unconscious consciousness of class, or group differences, may lead them to justify in their own minds the elimination of numerous persons from their fellowship because they are socially unacceptable. The church is an exclusive club to some congregations: FOR MEMBERS ONLY.

Rural church leaders are aware of this problem of evangelizing the rural masses but they claim no great knowledge of the solution. Very little study, and less progress, have been made toward the mixing of classes in the church and community. There is, as yet, meager counsel on the subject to offer the churches. However, an attempt is being made to implement Christian evangelism through knowledge of the social problems of enlistment for the church.

Diversity of Population

The problem of population diversity exists in every community.

Mixed populations require new elements in church work. It is not enough for the church to merely call people to worship. An "altar call" worked when people were of practically the same status, as was generally the case on the frontier. Diverse elements in the present-day rural population require a more inclusive approach to evangelism to make one united people among whom neighborhood and church activities may be possible.

Removing the barriers to successful rural evangelism depends upon Christian concern. The nature of social arrangements in most communities is such as to place the initiative for social participation in the hands of the church group. On the whole, church members are old settlers or "solid citizens" who possess the patterns of community leadership. They already belong to the "right" organizations and hold positions of prestige. They have social status because of reasonable success in farming or business. It is possible for them to control community customs and to practically determine who shall enjoy the privileges of local society, including the church. It is, therefore, pretty much up to the church group whether neglected classes and groups are to have the message and fellowship which the church can give.

Fellowship With All Men

Unless the older churches, which are made up of people who are generally "better off" than the neglected masses, reach out to all types of persons, this problem will persist. Until rural church members are willing to fellowship with all men—poor as well as rich, farmers as well as villagers, unrefined as well as cultured, and laborers as well as landowners and business men—they cannot hope to win the whole community. An attitude favoring acceptance of any type of people, however much they differ from the church group norm, is necessary.

Rural ministers must know more than the traditional techniques of evangelism. Studies must be made to indicate the social structure of parishes in rural areas and experimentation must be undertaken to discover the means of uniting into one congregation various typical groups within the local population.

A Seminar

Ministers should join in a local seminar on rural evangelism for the purpose of determining the peculiar demands of the rural parish. Such a seminar is at present a project among several town and country pastors in south-eastern North Dakota. Notes on the frequent meetings of the seminar during the past two years show that these rural pastors are aware of the problems of mixing village people and farmers.

The seminar began with a concern for the deeper meanings of evangelism. The ministers discussed devotional life, preaching and the example set by Christians as a means to reaching individuals for Christ. They made proposals for the general effectiveness of the parish program and the specific methods necessary to evangelism. They experimented in rural evangelism procedures in the several parishes of the area, discussing the results together afterward. They reveal a concern for reaching and serving the total population, a concern which brings them face to face with the problems of reaching diverse groups. The good work of the North Dakota seminar will finally be gathered up and made available to rural churches elsewhere.

Enlisting All People

Rural evangelism includes, and demands, an interest on the part of the church for the whole community and culture. Some rural leaders speak of community-mindedness, as an end in itself, but not all of them speak so lightly. Serious and informed leaders realize that evangelism requires vital community life. They know that evangelism succeeds, not in a social vacuum but within the setting of the neighborhood if the great as well as the small are to be saved. The churches must have for their aim, among other things, the welding together of rural people of different types—those

in open country and in the villages, people on the "right side of the tracks" and those on the wrong side. There must be an attempt to enlist all the people.

Half of the rural churches are in villages of 250 to 2500 population. Village churches must not neglect the farmer. They need to resist the tendency to end their ministry at the "city limits." The rural church must go out into the highways and hedges of the countryside to compel all the people to come into its life and work.

In dealing with rural evangelism it must be recalled that farmer and village people in the rural churches do not think of themselves as rural Christians; they think of themselves as Christians, as the late Warren H. Wilson has reminded us. They seek the grace of God and need it in terms of human frailty, without regard to the type of community in which they live. Rural and urban Christians have more in common than the outward differences seem to indicate. Farmers, villagers and city people need the same Christian grace for a similar human nature.

Rural and Urban Are Tools

The classifications of "rural" and "urban" are tools for churchmanship, representing an attempt to apply sociological knowledge to church work. While rural life has much in common with city culture, there are some fundamental differences which are characteristic of

ach. The vocation of farming and he relation of the farmer to the oil, as well as the intimate relationhips of country and village living, re factors affecting rural people nd religion. Parish methods and he preaching message need adaptaions to rural people because of heir surroundings. Evangelism reuires restudy by every rural pastor.

Rural evangelism, like urban vangelism, is the process of introducing persons into the Christian ife and enlisting them for the hurch by preaching, pastoral work, eligious education and fellowship. The text is the same in either case ut the context differs. An understanding of town and country eople and their society is needed n order to take full advantage of he opportunity of rural evangelism.

Fellowship of Laymen and Ministers

Ministers and laymen participated n a recent meeting of the Town and Country Commission of the Wisconin Congregational Conference, held at Union Congregational Church, Rio, Wis. The program consisted largely of a discussion of the rural church and rural school consolidation. This was led by B. W. Kreitlow of the University of Wisconsin.

The Commission also considered the organization of the Grant County Council of Churches, which is already doing an outstanding work in interdenominational cooperation. Reports were made about the Interdenominational School for Rural Ministers, held at Green Lake. Materials of use to choirs in small churches were distributed.

Department of Urban Church

• The Department of the Urban Church of the National Council of Churches has its first full-time secretary. The Rev. William J. Villaume, formerly director of the Department of Research and Strategy for the Massachusetts Council of Churches, has been appointed to that office.

Rural Church Institute

RALPH L. WILLIAMSON

The Rural Church Institute, Ithaca, New York, began its work September 1, 1935, with Mark Rich as its director. This was a half-time service because Mark Rich also did graduate work at Cornell University, for which he received the degree of Ph.D., and served as pastor at McLean, N.Y.

The starting of Rural Church Institute was a pioneer undertaking. Whether the field would respond with requests for service, or whether finances could be found beyond the first year, could not be foreseen. But the work developed beyond expectations and the validity of the idea of rural church extension work was proved. At the urgent call of the American Baptist Home Mission Society, Mark Rich left Rural Church Institute after three years of service to direct his own denomination's rural work on a national scale—a position he still holds.

Second Director

The writer of this record succeeded Mark Rich on October 1, 1938, supposedly for a period of three years or until he finished a thesis on "The Community Church." This was completed in 1940 by which time the program demanded full-time service, and financial support was increasing.

In 1938 the Institute's Board consisted of fifteen loyal members, most of whom were ministers or faculty members at Cornell University. There were about forty members in The Rural Fellowship. Only three denominations had active rural committees in 1938. The Institute met opposition and misunderstanding from some church leaders, but had the goodwill of many others, and excellent relations with Cornell leaders were developed. The Institute had become the Rural Department of the New York State Council of Churches in 1937. The equipment in 1938 consisted of a borrowed table and chair and a number of folders.

Expansion

The next half dozen years saw the work expand beyond the ability of one person to care for. In 1946 the director traveled over 27,000 miles and kept 206 engagements, besides the office work of writing, editing, promotion and correspondence. Therefore, when seeking a study leave to begin in 1947, Stanley Skinner was appointed as Associate Director. He also served in the McLean pastorate. Since May 1948 two men have been at work on the program of the Rural Church Institute.

A stock-taking of the past fifteen years reveals tremendous rural church advancement. We believe that the Rural Church Institute has had a great share in it. While the Institute is not solely responsible for the developments, it does take some credit for them.

Some of these developments are briefly mentioned here: Expansion of in-service training for rural ministers; use of radio and television for rural church work; increased use of survey methods; increased denominational emphasis on rural church work; increase in productoin of rural church literature; more church unions; and more cooperation between agricultural agencies and church leaders.

The Past Year

Now what of the present, or the past year? The enrollment of pastors in the summer school at Cornell increased from 9 in 1949 to 24 in 1950. Cooperation with the agricultural agencies has continued to expand.

Our Lord's Acre promotion has gone well; slides, literature and speakers have been furnished to scores of churches, and many churches have been improved.

There are now 354 subscribers to the quarterly publication, *Rural Fellowship*. About 23,000 copies of the Rural Life Sunday leaflet and Harvest Festival order of service were mailed out along with much accom-

panying material giving suggestions for community observances.

As Mark Rich says in his book, *Rural Prospect,* "To be associated with the rural church movement is a quickening experience." We deem it a privilege to be in this work. Sometimes we are the "choreboys" for the rural churches of the state of New York; at other times perhaps we are their stimulators. We pray for strength and wisdom to carry on this work to the glory of God.

Between Speeches

LAVERN C. DIBBLE

• One can often learn much between speeches and commission meetings. The National Convocation on the Church in Town and Country which was held at Columbia, Missouri, in the fall of 1950 was the first one I had attended, and I should like to share some of the impressions I gained between sessions.

Perhaps the greatest lesson I learned at Columbia is that there is a fellowship of rural church and community workers which is rich, strong and deep. This is an important factor in the rural life movement, helping to offset the loneliness and discouragements which attend the rural minister.

Furthermore, the rural church movement is without sectionalism and provincialism because of the type of leadership. So many ministers have gone from their home states to other sections of the country for college or seminary training, or pastoral service, that any group of ministers provides a cross-section of America. This makes for a cross-fertilization of rural church leadership and life. Then, too, the lay leaders in the movement—extension service workers, teachers of rural sociology and others—bring to the cause the benefits of their broad background and rich experience.

The Larger Community

Rural church leaders in America are community minded, concerned with the total task of the church in relation to the larger community of which it is a part. The methods of the rural sociologist, the principles of democracy, the economic and social needs of the people, as well as the spiritual ministry of the church, are all important factors in the thinking of rural church leaders. The Grange, the 4-H, and similar organizations, are considered allies, not competitors or overlapping agencies in the harvest fields of God.

It was thrilling to see the high proportion of young men at the Columbia Convocation. Of course we met and conversed with many of the old "war horses" of the rural church movement, but we also saw young men, many of them students in training for the rural ministry.

Spiritual cross-fertilization is in evidence in another direction also. Religious leaders become more sociological, scientific, and practical by taking courses in agricultural economics and working wtih country extension service leaders. The church also makes its contribution to the agricultural college and the non-sectarian community agencies. The church provides the spiritual basis of rural living, and inspires non-members to see the vision of "the beloved community" in which all have their part, and in which life is beautiful and good.

Health in Rural Mississippi

The Agricultural Experiment Station of the Mississippi State College has published a report on the *Health Practices of Rural People in Lee County* (Miss.). The study was made in cooperation with the Bureau of Agricultural Economics, U.S. Department of Agriculture. The data was compiled by Robert E. Galloway and Harold F. Kaufman.

The information in this report was gathered from 753 individuals and 204 representative families, 104 of which lived in the open country.

The study was made in order to show the efforts that people are making to maintain health and in preventing and curing illnesses. It is hoped that this study may suggest the next steps to be made in family planning and community action in the field of health.

A Harvest Scene

GILBERT WHITE

Waked by the gentle gleamings of the morn,
Soon clad, the reaper, provident of want,
Hies cheerful-hearted to the ripen'd field:
Nor hastes alone: attendant by his side

His faithful wife, sole partner of his cares,
Bears on her breast the sleeping babe; behind,
With steps unequal, trips her infant train;
Thrice happy pair, in love and labour join'd!

All day they ply their task; with mutual chat,
Beguiling each the sultry, tedious hours.
Around them falls in rows the sever'd corn,
Or the shocks rise in regular array.

But when high noon invites to short repast,
Beneath the shade of sheltering thorn they sit,
Divide the simple meal, and drain the cask:
The swinging cradle lulls the whimpering babe

Meantime; while growling round, if at the tread
Of hasty passenger alarm'd, as of their store
Protective, stalks the cur with bristling back,
To guard the scanty scrip and russet frock.

Your Harvest Festival

• Have you overlooked ordering *An Order of Service for a Harvest Festival?* If you have, you may still secure copies from your denominational board or from the Department of Publication and Distribution, National Council of Churches in the U. S. A., 297 Fourth Avenue, New York 10, N. Y., at the following rates: Single copies, 5 cents each; 100 copies or more, $2.60 for each 100 copies.

From the Churches

The Friedens Church, Geroninco, Texas, has an item of $1,000 for pastor's car allowance.

The Iowa Council of Churches and the Department of Sociology, Iowa State College, have given awards of merit to Peace Church, Bennett, A. J. Maronn, minister; Immanuel Church, Latimer, H. H. Wintermeyer, minister; St. Peter's Church, Franklin, and Zion Church, Primrose, A. E. Bergey, minister. The awards were made for well-balanced programs and community service.

"Equipment gifts" received by St. Paul's Church, Nashville, Ill., M. R. Zielinski, pastor, include an addresserette, a clearoscope for stencil work, brass entrance lights, and addressing machine, and the use of a tape recorder.

In St. Paul's Church, Attica, N. Y., Nelson Hauptman, pastor, one-third of the present members have joined within three years.

First Church, West Alexandria, Ohio, Frank Kostyn, pastor, needed a refrigerator for the church kitchen. The parish paper published the need. A refrigerator was soon located, and purchased by a church-school class.

Six acres of land in a Lord's Acre project are reported by Zion Church, Falls City, Neb., Roy Stock, pastor. The yield was a good crop of corn plus the joy of the cooperative work.

The yield from a number of acres of wheat land was among the gifts received by St. Andrew's Church, Dexter, Michigan, H. H. Schowe, minister, for the building fund for erection of a new parsonage. Gifts from non-members were numerous.

St. Paul's Church, New Bremen, Ohio, E. N. Bassler, pastor, hopes to dedicate, debt-free, a new educational building costing $125,000.

A tape recorder brings the church services to shut-ins and the sick who belong to St. John's Church, Buckskin, Indiana, Craig Reed, pastor. The young people are also getting a playground.

—From the *Party Line,* Evangelical and Reformed Church

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Ohio Council Circular

• The Town and Country Department, Ohio Council of Churches, Columbus, has issued a statement emphasizing "The Rural Church Working with Ohio Rural Agencies for Better Rural Living."

The rural program of the Ohio Council is summarized as follows: "We believe that all of life is sacred. For this reason, we feel that the church should be concerned with every area of man's experience. We recognize that the church has a unique task to perform in giving spiritual meaning to the work of all groups. Through our Department, we seek to work wth all churches, groups and agencies which desire to improve the quality of life of town and country people living together in a community.

"Our program is built by representatives of The Town and Country Commissions of the denominations and representatives of rural agencies in Ohio. It includes camps, seminars, workshops, institutes and School for Rural Leaders. We hold state, county, community, group and individual conferences. We teach the values of rural life by means of the spoken word, radio, newspapers and magazines."

Each agency with which the Council of Churches works is then described with a paragraph, as follows:

The Soil Conservation Service cooperates with farmer-organized and directed Soil Conservation Districts. It provides technicians who work with farmers in developing and applying a coordinated soil and water conservation program for each farm, field by field, acre by acre, and based on the needs and capabilities of the land.

Agricultural Extension education belongs to the whole family. Through demonstration teaching, people learn how to size up their own problems and to marshal their own resources for solution through their own programs—individual, family, group, community. The Land Grant College supports and trains volunteer leaders through County Extension Agents. County advisory committees keep rural values in mind.

The Farmers Home Administration of the United States Department of Agriculture serves farmers who operate family-type farms with loans under terms not normally available. Loans are made for operating expense and live-stock and equipment. Real estate loans are for purchase, development and enlargement of family-type farms. Housing loans are available for residents of rural areas for building.

Ohio Production and Marketing Administration aims to provide ample food and fiber for all, to conserve and rebuild soil and water resources, to improve the farm family standard of living. *Programs*: Agricultural Conservation, Agricultural Adjustment, Commodity Loan and Price Support, Sugar Beet Production, and Crop Insurance. *Ad-*

ministration: 1378 elected township committees, 88 elected county committees, one appointed State committee, each a committee of three Ohio farmers.

The Bureau of Special and Adult Education at Ohio State University helps to train professional and lay leaders in adult education. Professional leaders teach and occupy administrative positions in agencies such as "Y's," evening schools and colleges, farm organizations, and churches. Lay leaders lead study groups and hold offices in organizations such as P.T.A.'s, social and service clubs, patriotic organizations, church groups.

The Farm Bureau is an organization of farmers who are banded together to promote the welfare of agriculture and the rural community. These aims are accomplished through a program of legislation, cooperatives and education which includes more than 1500 neighborhood groups known as "Advisory Councils."

The Grange is a farm fraternity of over eighty-four years of service to rural people. Its ritual interprets the holiness of the earth and man's stewardship of its resources. It seeks through education and legislation to improve the life of individuals of all ages, of families and of communities. It carries on its program through local, county, state and national organizations.

Vocational Education in Agriculture and Homemaking trains present and prospective farmers and homemakers through high school and adult programs. The instruction, conducted in classrooms, laboratories, shops, homes and on farms, is based on practical situations and projects in the home and on the farm. The Future Farmers of America and the Future Homemakers of America provide organizational activities that train for good citizenship.

The Peasant's Home

• *The Peasant's Home* and *The Neglected Partner* are recent pamphlets which depict living conditions in rural India and suggest campaigns for their improvement. F. L. Brayne, the author, was, as a district officer in the Punjab, a pioneer of rural reconstruction in India. More lately, he was Brigadier of the Indian Army.

Mr. Brayne believes that "the first thing to do, in attacking the standard of living, is to try to paint a picture of the standard it is desired to achieve . . . to put to the people a picture of a new manner of living which is so obviously better than their present way of life that they will gradually consent to do all the extra work which will be necessary for the achievement of the new standard they desire."

The standard of living of a country is the standard of its homes, says Mr. Brayne. The program of improvement must therefore begin with "The Neglected Partner"—the housewife and mother. She must have education and training before she will cooperate in raising the standard of living.

Although the illustrations used in these pamphlets are those of northern India, the author believes that "the principles will apply to a very much larger area."

The Peasant's Home and *The Neglected Partner* are published by The Village Welfare Association, 36 Well Walk, London, N.W.3, England. They are priced at sixpence per copy.

Goats Raise Living Standard

The Kiyosoto (Japan) project of the Episcopal Church "to make level in rural Japan a highway for God" is a 350-acre tract of land, directed by Paul Rusch (born in Louisville, Ky.), who is the only American involved in the project.

A recent issue of *Newsweek* gave the historical background of this venture, and stated that in addition to a hospital, chapel, and farm land, it is proposed to open a vocational school, kindergarten, youth school, playgrounds, a village hall, and a cooking school to teach the natives how to prepare food.

Vegetables and fruits are raised on the farm land to supplement the meager diet of the native people.

United Presbyterianism

• Many of the Presbyterian denominations have struggled for years to find ways of uniting their several church families into one great body. Commissions on union and cooperation have labored diligently in the creation of master plans, none of which have as yet been invoked. All this has been done on the ecclesiastical level through the courts of the churches, such as the General Assemblies.

Just as the General Assemblies of the Presbyterian churches were closing their 1951 sessions late in May, without being able to report any real progress toward church union, the Town and Country Church departments and divisions of four of these larger Presbyterian Denominations, the Presbyterian U. S., U. S. A., United, and Cumberland, with their national secretaries and leaders of town and country work, met together for a three day town and country pastor's institute at Louisille, Kentucky. Each of the denominations was well represented.

This group of Presbyterians was thoroughly united. They did not debate church policy, nor doctrines; but rather sought diligently how best to understand and to do the job of the rural church. There was an unusual eagerness in this fellowship and a forgetfulness of denominationalism as they worked out solutions to their common problems. This was Presbyterian Church union in terms of the problems and tasks involved in building the Kingdom of God in Rural America.

—H. S. Randolph

Honors for Rural Scout Leaders

The National Committee on Rural Scouting, Boy Scouts of America, informs us that its vice-chairman, Raymond W. Miller of F.A.O., has been awarded the Silver Buffalo for distinguished service to boyhood at this year's National Court of Honor.

Inscribed Scout statuettes were also presented to E. R. Eastman, American Agriculturist, Ithaca, N.Y.; Charles L. Sommers, St. Paul; and L. J. Taber, former Master of the National Grange, Syracuse, N.Y.

Rural Nebraska

ETHEL KUECK

• It all started with the idea that the story about abandoned open country churches has not been fully told. Are the people in the small communities being reached by the larger churches in the nearby cities, now that transportation has ceased to be a problem—or has it? This question initiated a new type of experiment in Webster County, Nebraska.

The experiment was to be conducted through a series of daily vacation church schools, some in town, some in open country areas, making each a community school.

Reaching Communities

The first Bible school was held in the churches in the county seat, the Christian and Methodist churches cooperating. With the exception of the writer, who was engaged as Director, all local help was used. Before the two weeks were ended the enrollment had reached 110. This was far above the number expected for the school had drawn more from the surrounding country than had been anticipated.

It was with some trepidation therefore that the third week we began a similar school at the outpoint of the charge, six miles away. Here we used an entirely new corps of workers, and were more than pleased with both the attendance and the splendid spirit of community cooperation. This is a little town in the midst of a farming community, and in order to cut down transportation problems, the school was held for only one week with all-day sessions. Forty-eight children were enrolled here. This was a much greater number than expected, so it might have been concluded that all the children in these communities had been reached.

Still questioning, the next week we held a Bible school in a little country school house seven miles farther out, again using local help. It was a busy time, for rains had been frequent, harvest had been delayed and must be hurried. Yet parents took time to get the eleven children to the school in the mornings and come for them again at the end of the day. Everyone carried lunches and drinking water. Enthusiasm of the children was high and community cooperation fine.

Sharing Fellowship

From here we went the following week to a beautiful little open country church where services were no longer being held. Neighbors told us it could not be done, there were not enough children available. But twenty-two came, by car, by tractor, by jeep, walking—any way to get there. Seven denominations were represented in this school.

Our last place of experiment was at another country school house four miles from the county seat where the first school had been held. But again the children came, twenty this time, and again we used local help, with a wonderful spirit of cooperation and a real hunger on the part of the children. Here, as at the little church, the closing program was preceded by a bountiful community dinner, where neighbors met and shared in fellowship together.

The Needs

What about the needs of communities like these? Their shopping is done at the stores in the county seat town, but even here they visit in little neighborhood groups as they meet on the sidewalks. While they are a part of the larger community activities, it is definitely true that the fullest ministry of our church is not reaching them. We close our series of schools feeling that much has been accomplished, but wondering what the next step is to be. Interest has been quickened, there is a readiness to go forward. Go forward to what—leadership training, group ministry, larger parish, or the neglect which would be fertile ground for the zeal of nearby sects? The people are ready—are we?

—From *The Rural Church*

National Council Film Strip

• A black and white film-strip which portrays the work of the National Council of the Churches of Christ in the U. S. A. has been made available. The title of this film-strip is "United in Christ." It was produced by the National Council's Department of Audio-Visual and Radio Education of the Division of Christian Education, in cooperation with the Council's Department of Public Relations. The cost of this is $3.75. It may be procured from Miss Pearl Rosser, 79 East Adams Street, Chicago 3, Ill.

Youth Training

• A proposal to "crowd out" the harmful influences commonly aligned against youth has been advanced by the National Council of Church's Division of Christian Education.

The experimental plan would be part of a long range program to "reach every person wth Christian teaching." It was stated that the need for such a proposal was based on the fact that between "25 to 27 million American children and young people are destined to reach maturity without religious training."

Purposes of This Journal

The purposes of this Journal are:

A. To encourage cooperation among rural churches.

B. To improve the administration of the local church, this to include organization of the church, finance, religious education, community relationships, and the training of lay leadership.

C. To stimulate the development of a Christian philosophy of rural life, this to embrace ethical issues in agriculture, social reconstruction, and government programs; and the content of the minister's message.

Part of Larger Program

The Journal is an important part of an enlarged "cooperative rural church program" that will encourage a national "rural church movement."

The Age-Old Problem of the Land

• In the last half century incredible progress has been made toward assuring the good fruits of our mighty industry to the greatest number. We have not abolished poverty; we shall never abolish it completely, so long as man is exposed to crippling accident and lingering disease of body and mind. But with the expansion of social security, with the marvellous advance of medical science, with the quickening of the public conscience toward the handicapped, the sharpest fangs of poverty are being drawn.

We cannot be so complacent about peace. The world cries peace, peace, but there is no peace. True, actual fighting is confined to a few areas remote from our American experiences. But the "cold war" goes on remorselessly. The world is divided into two great camps, and only a born optimist can foresee a peaceful rapprochement in the near future.

If it were merely a conflict of ideologies we could take heart. For ideologies grow weary. But there is something deeper over which the ideologies flutter. That is the age-old problem of the land.

There was never a time in history when the man who worked the land was content to give up a share of the product to the holder of legal title to the land—often an absentee. Agrarian revolt has become endemic in much of the eastern world. We shall encounter it sooner or later on the American continent, where indeed it won its first successes in the Mexican revolution.

Land to the peasants was the most effective slogan of Lenin and Trotsky, in the Bolshevik revolution. There was no sincerity in Communist agrarianism: once communism is strong it takes the land away from the peasants and organizes agriculture in collectives, where no man can call a square foot of soil his own.

A few wise American statesmen understand the relation between agrarian unrest and Communist advance. At the head of this category of statesmen stands General MacArthur. But most of our statesmen refuse even to recognize the existence of the land problem.

In time we shall grapple with the land problem, and communism will wane. We shall then enjoy peace and plenty.

ALVIN JOHNSON

—Reprinted from *The American Journal of Economics and Sociology,* by permission.

Progress at Pittman Center

• Hundreds of mountain families living on the Tennessee edge of the Great Smoky Mountain National Park look to Pittman Community Center for spiritual inspiration, educational facilities, medical services, and economic leadership. This center is one of the many important projects of the Division of Home Missions and Church Extension of The Methodist Church.

Started at the request of Dr. John S. Burnett, himself a native of the mountains, the center was opened with the erection of the high school building in 1921. Added later were the elementary school, the home economics, manual training, handicrafts and store buildings, and the health center.

The superintendent of the project now is Dr. Robert F. Thomas, a former missionary to Malaya, a gifted physician, and a resourceful administrator devoted to the welfare of his mountain neighbors. He usually makes about 3,000 professional calls a year visiting the sick. Hundreds of examinations and immunizations are given every year.

Pittman Center affords leadership for the neighborhood in methods of agriculture and other enterprises. It owns two small farms, and has a dairy herd, chickens, and hogs. The cattle now include some prize winning pure bred, registered Ayrshires.

The tourists who come to Gatlinburg and the national park provide an eager market for the hand-made products of the Center. The Pinnacle Handicrafts Cooperative, organized several years ago to handle the beautiful woven work of the mountain women, is doing a fine piece of work under the direction of Mrs. Thomas, the Superintendent's wife.

Most important of all, and at the heart of all the work of Pittman Center, is its spiritual mission. Although under the handicap of having no church building there, the Center is the hub of a Methodist circuit.

Those who are familiar with the program of Pittman Center have urgently recommended, among other profitable investments to be made there, the building of a well-appointed chapel to symbolize and serve the spiritual purpose of the mission.

C.R.F. Bulletins

• Recent Christian Rural Fellowship Bulletins, published at 156 Fifth Avenue, New York 10, N. Y., have featured noteworthy reprints of addresses and sermons on significant phases of rural life. Among these are:

"Rural Community Ideals," by Joseph Ackerman, which stresses the preservation of natural resources, education, the church, health, recreation, and the mobilization of resources.

Shirley E. Greene, in "What Does it Mean to be a Christian Farmer?" gives practical suggestions for discussion groups. He says that enough such groups would "change the moral tone and the spiritual quality of rural life and agricultural practice in America."

William G. Mather's address, delivered before the Baptist Planning Conference, held at Green Lake, Wis., tells about "The Mission of the Rural Church"; Griscom Morgan, acting director of Community Service, writes about "The Community as Person."

Authur Rickwood, an English farmer, writes about "The Faith of a Countryman"; Premchand G. Bhagat, field secretary for the Church of the Brethren in India, about "The Rural Church and its Message to Free India."

A condensation of J. Winfield Fetz's booklet, "Christian Mutual Aid," is also featured, as is a sermon by Ralph W. Sockman on "God's Garden Spot."

West Virginia Coal Mining Communities

A recent survey of "Some Churches n Coal Mining Communities of Vest Virginia" has been document-d and is now ready for distribution. t was prepared by Mark Rich, sec-etary of Town and Country Work f the American Baptist Home Mis-on Society, who also directed the vork of the survey.

West Virginia lies in the belt vhere the most extensive bitumi-nous coal mining of the country akes place. Thus, it was felt that uch a survey as this was requisite in order to create a better understand-ng of the problems and needs of the church in coal mining communities, and to discover and help the un-churched people in these areas.

Sponsored by the West Virginia Council of Churches and the Com-mittee on Cooperative Field Re-search of the National Council of Churches, eleven coal mining com-munities in West Virginia were studied during 1950, the typical community having a population of 2,500 or less. A corps of surveyors helped in this project, under the leadership of Dr. Rich.

This survey, unlike other studies of coal mining communities, is oriented toward the church. The findings indicate that "as a whole, churches in the coal mining commu-nities are not highly formalized in organization, orders of worship, pat-tern of program, building or out-look." Many of the rural churches in these communities "are served by ministers who have little or no spe-cial training for the ministry . . . the minister is often engaged in secular pursuits for primary income." Some of the major denominations, how-ever, maintain resident ministers and a balanced program.

Many charts and statistical tables are presented in this report on the churches studied, their membership, ministers' salaries, value of church property, programs, and community activities.

"The West Virginia Coal-Town Church is a Pioneer Church," with special problems and obstacles to surmount, Dr. Rich states. "It is primarily a Protestant opportunity."

Suggestions for improving the church's ministry as a whole, as well as for improving community rela-tions, are given in the closing chap-ter: "Goals to be Reached."

This report may be procured from the West Virginia Council of Churches, Box 8, Charleston 21, West Virginia, for 50 cents per copy.

Goats and Social Security

We find religion as well as wisdom and inspiration and practical knowl-edge in the *Dairy Goat Journal,* Co-lumbia, Mo. A recent issue con-tained an article by H. S. Norton on "Goats, Compost and a Way of Life."

"If you have goats or want to live in the natural way . . . follow the goat and learn from her. Human be-ings have become so detached from the natural life that we have largely lost our sense of taste, smell, and hearing. The goat still possesses these, especially a free-pastured goat . . .

"We hear much of social security nowadays . . . Real security comes from the ownership of good, produc-tive land; a piece of the good earth and the privilege and duty of keep-ing it fertile. Land ownership, if possible, and the tilling of the soil and the way of life it suggests is the normal and natural way of life."

Rural Churchman Goes to City Parish

• "The uprooting of the rural pop-ulation, characteristic of recent years, is particularly pronounced among Negroes who have flooded in-to cities," writes Betty Thompson in a recent issue of *The Pastor's Jour-nal,* 150 Fifth Avenue, New York 11, New York.

Miss Thompson reported the find-ings of the Quadrennial City Insti-tute, held in Houston, Texas, and sponsored by the Department of Ne-gro Work, Board of Missions and Church Extension of the Methodist Church. Practical methods were dis-cussed for bringing in new members from rural areas.

A Workshop

• I have been to a workshop that should be called a *Workshop.* It is held each summer at the Williman-tic State Teachers College, Conn., and organized and directed by Ken-neth Lundy of the State Department of Education of that state. Students may come from any state.

I never saw about one hundred and fifty adults drive the way they did at this Arts and Crafts Work-shop. I have been around summer schools and workshops and insti-tutes, and I never saw a corps of teachers work so hard. And every-body seemed to enjoy the process.

Many crafts were pursued, and teaching methods were stressed for those who teach. What I liked was that craftsmanship was exalted day by day. There were no assemblies after the first day, and no speeches thereafter, either. That was good for us, even though the speeches were good the first day.

Every day of the two weeks of the session I felt I was getting more than I was paying for, itself a tribute to those who organized and main-tained the Workshop.

B.Y.L.

Recreation

• "Recreation can be anything be-yond the normal line of duty that a person does not have to do but does just for the fun or enjoyment of it," writes E. J. Niederfrank in the fore-word of a recent U. S. Department of Agriculture publication entitled, "Planning Recreation for Rural Home and Community."

This bulletin is an excellent guide for extension workers. In it there are activity suggestions for all age groups, for families to have fun to-gether, for meetings and organiza-tions, and for community events.

"Planning Recreation for Rural Home and Community" is Agricul-tural Information Bulletin No. 20. It may be procured from the Super-intendent of Documents, U. S. Gov-ernment Printing Office, Washing-ton 25, D. C. for 30 cents.

Book Reviews

Cradled in the Waves. By J. T. Croteau. The Ryerson Press, Toronto. 1951. $3.25.

This is the story of adult education in Prince Edward Island "through radio, discussion groups, libraries, cooperatives, credit unions, and university extension courses." Prince Edward Island was called by the Indians "Abegweit," meaning cradled in the waves.

Professor Croteau, who now teaches at the Catholic University, Washington, was formerly a teacher of economics at St. Dunstan's University, Prince Edward Island. He was engaged for some years in encouraging and organizing the study groups and other adult education agencies that emphasized economic cooperation.

Some fifty credit unions and thirty cooperatives with a membership of over 11,000 persons have demonstrated, says Professor Croteau, "an effective method of economic reconstruction."

The movements in the Maritimes have been well publicized, and the results have been "sensational and convincing." But there are also, says the author, "communities where we failed to uncover the local leadership."

Economic cooperation is not a substitute for religion, says Professor Croteau. But it is an effective tool for application of Christian teaching, and it has enabled persons of different faiths to learn to work together and to become brotherly.

B. Y. L.

Farming and Gardening in the Bible. By Alastair I. Mackay. Rodale Press, Emmaus, Pa. 1950. $3.00.

This book will appeal to farmers and gardeners, and also to nature lovers and mere lovers of the Bible. It is the first book we have had by this author, and it represents a comprehensive screening of all Biblical texts dealing with various phases of farming and gardening. These are arranged in orderly sequence in sections delegated to "Herbs," "Trees," "Vines," "Flowers," "Vegetables," "Field Crops," "Perfumes and Spices," "Weeds," "Flocks and Herds," etc.

The author of *Farming and Gardening in the Bible* is a Canadian and a veteran of World War II. He is a lover of the Bible and nature—"neither a professional nor an expert," he says, "but an enthusiastic amateur in both fields." He has accomplished this labor of love by dint of much research.

R. B. R.

Selected Rural Fiction

Compiled by
CAROLINE SHERMAN

Swiftwater. By Paul Annixter. 256 pp. A. A. Wyn, Inc., N. Y. C. $2.50.

Infused with thrilling descriptions of the Canadian North Woods, permeated by the silent devotion of woodsman and woods-dedicated son. The boy succeeds beyond all hopes in getting a wildlife sanctuary established.

Grant of Kingdom. By Harvey Fergusson. 311 pp. William Morrow & Co., N. Y. C. $3.00.

Panoramic view of the evolution of a romantic slice of New Mexico by a proved writer of the Southwest. Masterful strokes change this country from an unexpected reach with vast natural resources, owned by a Spanish don who never saw it, through ownership and occupation by a born pioneer developer, and on to an intricate financial proposition controlled by eastern capital. The nature and ways of its people change with the circumstances.

Richard Walden's Wife. By Eleanor Kelly. 391 pp. Bobbs-Merrill Co., Indianapolis. $3.00.

Story interest runs high in this novel of a privileged Maryland family transferred from a plantation on the Eastern shore to Wisconsin's pioneer land and melting pot, as the Civil War approaches. Evidences of true-to-records are many, incidents are unusual, characters are well realized and arresting, reactions to the utterly changed conditions are startlingly varied.

The Home Place. By Fred Gipson. 248 pp. Harper & Bros., N. Y. C. $2.75.

Conservation farming, in a Texas area being laid waste by soil mining, and a simple and appealing family life are the themes.

Hie to the Hunters. By Jesse Stuart. 265 pp. Whittlesey House, N. Y. C. $3.00.

Although not one of the author's best, this lively narrative of the Kentucky mountains provides certain strikingly successful episodes.

The Town. By Conrad Richter. 433 pp. Alfred Knopf, Inc., N. Y. C. $3.50.

Preferably this book is read only after *The Trees* and *The Fields,* listed in earlier years. The three volumes trace in mellow and perceptive fashion the fifty-year development of a corner of Ohio.

Red Bone Woman. By Carlyle Tillery. 314 pp. John Day Co., N. Y. C. $3.00.

Red Bones is the local name given to an obscure segment of our population living in certain localities in and near Louisiana. They and the author are both new to fiction. This sympathetic but unsparing story of these baffling people shows them to be peculiarly akin to the earth and its ways, and it develops a strong appeal.

Rural Disciples

• Sixty-eight per cent of the congregations of the Disciples of Christ are located in rural areas, according to a recent issue of *The Christian-Evangelist,* St. Louis, Mo.

This issue, which was devoted to the rural church, included articles by Clyde C. Leeds and Mrs. Leeds on "The Threefold Mission of the Rural Church" and an address to wives of rural ministers.

The Disciples are making a special effort to strengthen the church in town and country.

Oregon Church Improvement Project

Nineteen Oregon Churches have ceived recognition from the Town nd Country Church Committee of he Oregon Council of Churches for nprovements in buildings and comunity service program made durng the first six months of 1951. The asis for the improvements was a score sheet" for town and country hurches prepared by the Council. articipation was open to churches f all denominations in communities nder 2500 population.

The certificates of recognition vere presented to representatives of he winning churches at the Annual Town and Country Leadership Intitute at Corvallis by Mr. Harry eymour, chairman of the Oregon Council of Churches committee.

Through the cooperation of the ears, Roebuck Foundation, Chicago, ubstantial cash awards were presentd to three churches in each of three lassifications—1. open country hurches; 2. communities under 1000 population; and 3. communities rom 1000 to 2500.

The churches receiving awards vere as follows:

Open County Churches:

Valley Christian Church, Hood River—first prize; McFarland Methodist Church—second prize; Camas Valley Methodist Church, Mulino Baptist Church—both tied for third prize.

Communities under 1,000:

Clatskanie Presbyterian Church —first prize; Dufur Christian Church, Coburg Church of Christ—tied for second place; Dufur Methodist Church—third prize.

Larger Communities:

Wallowa Methodist Church—first prize; Carlton Baptist Church—second prize; Beaverton Methodist Church—third prize.

Honorable mention awards were made to Logan Community Church, Rufus Nazarene Church, and Canby Methodist Church. Certificates of Achievement were presented to Coburg Methodist Church, Evergreen Community Church, Madras Methodist Church, Willamette Methodist Church and Pleasant Home Methodist Church.

According to The Rev. Gilbert B. Christian, executive secretary of the Oregon Council of Churches, the improvement contest will be continued for a second year and will be open to any church of any denomination, either Protestant or Catholic, in any community under 2500. Full information on contest requirements may be obtained from the Oregon Council of Churches, 215 S. E. Ninth Avenue, Portland 14, Ore.

Iowa Recognizes Community Service

• Twelve Iowa Baptist churches were recognized for the community service which they are giving. This recogniton was extended by Dr. Floyd Andre, Dean of Agriculture at Iowa State College during the 1951 Iowa Rural Pastor's Institute.

The churches which were granted certificates this year were:

People's Baptist Church, Ogden, Dan Bean, pastor; Lamont Baptist Church, Lamont, John Dikkers, pastor; First Baptist Church, Denison, Roy Larson, pastor; First Baptist Church, Atlantic; Paul Ginn, newly called to the pastorate; Bethel Baptist Church, Marble Rock, Charles Fox, pastor; First Baptist Church Hamburg, Carl Kingsley, pastor; First Baptist Church, Hillsboro, Ed Skoglund, pastor; Harrisburg Baptist Church, Bonaparte, Ed Skoglund, pastor; First Baptist Church, Mt. Ayr, U. E. Burroughs, pastor; First Baptist Church, Sac City, Robert Heydon, pastor; First Baptist Church, Newton, C. V. Jones, pastor; First Baptist Church, Burnside, Sam Blumhagen, pastor.

Items which are considered necessary before a church can be given recognition are: an adequate religious program including a general program of spiritual development for residents of the community service program which provides Christian leadership for activities of the community which are not specifically church sponsored.

Community Forest

• The Shannondale Community Forest of 4,080 acres near Salem, Missouri, is the outcome of a fourteen-year-old dream of the Rev. Vincent Bucher, pastor of the community parish in the Shannondale Hills . . . a "dream" that came true because of the unrelenting determination of this pastor and his people.

Fourteen years ago, Mr. Bucher, then a newcomer pastor to the Shannondale Community parish, was fighting a forest fire. The fire didn't reach the community . . . but its ravages set this pastor of the Evangelical and Reformed Church to thinking. Those Ozark people were dependent on the forests for a part of their living . . . modern forestation methods eventually could rebuild those forests and permit them to yield an annual production of timber for all time to come!

Dedication

Mr. Bucher and others pleaded this cause until the Missouri Valley Synod of the Evangelical and Reformed Church began to raise funds for this purpose. Soon a substantial payment was made on the purchase price for a 3,520-acre tract. Later additional land was bought, bringing the total acreage to 4,080 acres, and funds are being sought for a continuing reforestation project. On October 23, 1949, the project was dedicated in the name of God "to the true interests of the people, soil, nutrition and higher standards of living." It is to be a demonstration of tree farming, to show what can be done.

The forest is to be managed carefully with the help of technical foresters to heal its wounds, suffered from fire and unwise cutting. The products of its trees will go to furnish employment to the residents of the community.

The Community Forest and Mission at Shannondale are under the direction of the Board of National Missions, Evangelical and Reformed Church, 1720 Chouteau Avenue, St. Louis 3, Missouri.

Announcement Regarding the 1951 Convocation on the Church in Town and Country

The Place and Time: Portland, Oregon, October 30- November 1.

Program: A printed program is available on application to your Board of Home Missions.

Registration Fee: A registration fee of $1.00 will be charged to help carry the expense of the Convocation. This is paid when you register at First Baptist Church, 12th and Taylor Streets, Portland.

Reservation of Rooms in Homes: If you wish a room in a home, *please make application in advance,* mailing this to the Rev. Gilbert B. Christian, Oregon Council of Churches, 215 S. E. Ninth Avenue, Portland 14, Oregon. The Oregon Council of Churches cannot be responsible for any request received later than October 19, 1951.

Who May Attend: Everyone interested in the town and country church.

Evangelism in the Rural Church

• "If rural churches are to win people for the Lord, it is necessary for them to set up a permanent program which will provide them with an effective method and type of evangelism," writes James W. Sells in a recent issue of *Shepherds,* Nashville, Tenn.

Mr. Sells lists six basic methods of evangelism for the rural church in this issue: mass evangelism; visitation; conservation of the church's own members; the use of laity in the manner for which they are best suited; organization of new churches and neighborhood Sunday schools; publicity and cooperative programs.

Prayer at Harvest-time

• Almighty ruler of heaven and earth, under whose protection I live and move and have my being, I lift up my praise to thee for autumn and harvest-time. Touched by the breath of the frost, maples and oaks are resplendent in their gold and scarlet. Corn stands in the fields of man's planting, row upon row, as a reward granted for his toil in cultivating the good earth. The apple limbs hang low, as if in gratitude for blossom-time, the summer's sun and rain, and for the invigorating breath of the fall. Ducks fly in their phalanx formation under the weakening rays of the sun, on their pilgrimage to the southland.

I give thee hearty thanks for the bounties of nature, beseeching thee to give me wisdom to use them to thy glory and for relief of those in need. As the days grow shorter and man prepares for the winter's coming, I pray that I may know how to number my days that I may apply my heart unto wisdom. *Amen.*

—From *Boys' Prayers,* by Robert M. Bartlett, Association Press

Summer Reflections

• These are some reflections of a student minister who shared in the tasks of a four-point parish in northern Wisconsin. The parish is the Medford, Wis., charge on the northern district of the West Wisconsin Conference.

Simply stated, it was worth the effort. I don't believe I could have had a greater variety of valuable experiences in any other situation in such a short length of time. The program was very extensive. The experience included preaching twice a Sunday, conducting two funerals, directing daily vacation church schools, participating in a dedicatory service for a new church building, directing a choir, carrying on a survey, calling, and—oh yes!—pitching hay. Carrying the responsibility for a few devotional programs over the local radio station also proved to be an invaluable experience.

—Royal J. Synwalt, Jr.
Reprinted from *The Rural Church*

Guide for Christian Life and Work

• An analysis of Christian principles to serve as a guide for the churches and individual Christians in the "present crises" was approved by the general board of the National Council of Churches.

The statement, prepared by the Council's Division of Christian Life and Work after four months of study, is for use by the Council's constituent churches in fitting their activities into current issues and problems.

"It is inherent in the mandate of the Gospel that the churches must demonstrate the true meaning of Christian brotherhood by a ministry which includes all persons without regard to race or national origin," the statement said.

The statement said that to translate his faith into action, the individual Christian must keep persons above things, help raise standards of general morality, increase the common welfare, go beyond political and social expediency, and show a willingness to sacrifice for freedom and justice.

Specifically, the statement added, the Christian should strive to conserve the nation's natural and human resources, help abolish poverty, take an active part in economic groups and seek the promotion of international trade.

Down on the Cape with Thoreau

A new edition of Henry David Thoreau's *Cape Cod,* with illustrations by Henry Bugbee Kane, and an Introduction by Henry Beston, has been published by W. W. Norton & Company, 101 Fifth Avenue, New York 3, N.Y. The volume is priced at $4.00.

Out of print for many years, this book has been called "the Cape Odyssey." For this edition there has been added to the traditional text the Journal of the excursion when Thoreau walked the great beach alone and for the last time.